

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 249567

NODIS

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM CAIRO OCT 17:

QUOTE S E C R E T CAIRO 17194

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG EG US

SUBJ: FAHMY'S PRELIMINARY REACTION TO U.S. WORKING PAPER

REF: STATE 248586

SUMMARY: CONVYED TO FAHMY THIS EVENING SUBSTANC
REFTEL, STRESSING OVERRIDING NEED TO BREAK SHACKLES
OF PROCEDURAL DETAILS SO THAT WE CAN GET TO GENEVA.
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FAHMY, WHO HAD EARLIER TODAY HAD "TOUGH," THREE-HOUR
SESSION WITH ARAFAT AND PLO LEADERS, INDICATED
AGREEMENT WITH OUR PURPOSE, BUT OPINED OUR CLARIFICATIONS
HAVE NOT ALLAYED HIS PROBLEMS IN TRYING TO PERSUADE PLO
AND OTHER ARAB STATES TO GO ALONG. HE GAVE HIS CANDID REACTIONS
TO OUR POINTS (PARA 4). HE ALSO INDICATED THAT HE NEEDED
URGENT ANSWER, IF POSSIBLE BY TOMORROW MORNING, ON HOW
WE PROPOSE TO PROCEED IN RECONVENING GENEVA, ASSUMING
A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE FORMULA TO DO SO CAN BE FOUND
(PARA 5). SAID HE HOPD PRESIDENT SADAT'S FORMAL REPLY
TO PRESIDENT CARTER CAN BE GIVEN TO ME EITHER SOMETIME

LATE TOMORROW OR ON THURSDAY. END SUMMARY.

1. MET WITH FAHMY THIS EVENING AT HIS APARTMENT TO GO OVER CONTENTS REFTEL. HE HAD EARLIER IN THE DAY PARTICIPATED IN SADAT'S MEETING WITH SUHARTO AND SUBSEQUENTLY HAD HELD THREE HOUR MEETING WITH ARAFAT AND PLO LEADERS. OUR MEETING HAD TO BE ABBREVIATED BECAUSE HE HAD TO LEAVE FOR SADAT'S STATE DINNER FOR SUHARTO.

2. I TOLD HIM WE ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THERE ARE ASPECTS OF WP WHICH ARAB PARTIES MAY NOT LIKE AND APPRECIATE HIS DIFFICULTIES IN PERSUADING OTHER ARABS TO ADOPT CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES. AS HE KNEW FROM PRESS ACCOUNTS, HOWEVER, WE ALSO HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY GETTING ISRAELIS TO ADOPT CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE AND TO AGREE TO WP IN SPITE OF PROVISIONS THEY DO NOT LIKE. AS PRESIDENT CARTR STATED IN HIS LETTER TO SADAT, IT IS IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST TO BREAK THE SHACKLES OF PROCEDURAL DETAILS. WE RECOGNIZE THERE MAY BE CONCERNS, BUT HOPE THAT SADAT AND HE WILL SUBORDINATE THESE TO OVERRIDING OBJECTIVE THAT WE KNOW THEY SHARE OF GETTING TO GENEVA. WP, AS PRESENTLY WORDED, DOES NOT SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS, BUT
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DOES OFFER ALL PARTIES FLEXIBILITY TO PROTECT THEIR INTEREST IN PERIOD AHEAD. SUCH OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS AS REMAIN WILL BEST BE RESOLVED ON A PRAGMATIC BASIS. MOREOVER, AS I WAS SURE HE WOULD AGREE, SOME AMBIGUITY NECESSARY IN TEXT IF IT IS TO ENABLE US TO GET TO GENEVA.

3. I THEN WENT THROUGH POINTS CITED PARAS 3 AND 5-9 REFTEL, REPEATING SEVERAL SO THAT THERE WAS NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT WHAT WAS INTENDED. FAHMY LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AND WITH ONLY AN OCCASIONAL INTERRUPTION. WHEN I HAD FINISHED, HE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTANDS PURPOSE OF LATEST VERSION OF WP, BUT THAT HIS PROBLEMS WITH IT HAD NOT BE ALLAYED BY OUR CLARIFICATION. IT WAS NOT QUESTION OF EGYPT

HE INSISTED. SO FAR AS SADAT AND HE ARE CONCERNED, AS HE HAD INDICATED IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK, EGYPT WOULD GO TO GENEVA WITHOUT 242, A WP OR ANYTHING. THEIR PROBLEM IS PERSUADING THE PLO AND SYRIANS THAT WP REPRESENTS ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENT. HE HAD EARLIER IN THE DAY HAD A "TOUGH" MEETING WITH ARAFAT AND PLO LEADERS, DURING WHICH HE HAD URGED THEM NOT TO BE HUNG UP ON 242, WP, OR WHAT HAVE YOU. THEY SHOULD AGREE HAVE GENEVA MEET WITHOUT DEALY AND WITH PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION, WHICH HE HAD TOLD THEM MEANS PLO REGARDLESS OF WHAT ISRAELIS SAY. HE HAD SHOWN ARAFAT THE SP AND HAD GOTTEN SOME PRELIMINARY REACTIONS. SADAT AND HE ARE DUE TO MEET WITH ARAFAT A SECOND TIME TOMORROW AND WILL DISCUSS THE PAPER FURTHER.

4. ON THE POINTS WE HAD MADE, HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD GIVE HIS CANDID REACTION:

(A) HE HAD ASSUMED THAT THE IDEA OF INCLUDING PALESTINIANS IN NATIONAL DELEGATIONS, AS INDICATED IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER, WAS INTENDED TO COVER PALESTINIANS WHO MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THE JORDANIAN SECRET

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DELEGATION. HE AGREED THAT IN SADAT'S "ORAL MESSAGE," WHICH HE HAD DELIVERED, THE POSSIBILITY OF INCLUDING PALESTINIANS IN THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION HAD BEEN MENTIONED AS ONE OF THREE ALTERNATIVES. HIS POINT WAS, HOWEVER, THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO RPT NO DOUBLE OR TRIPLE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION. HE SAW NO NEED TO INCLUDE PALESTINIANS IN NATIONAL AS WELL AS UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION IF LATTER ACCEPTED BY ALL PARTIES.

B(B) HE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT DAYAN'S MAKING PUBLIC THE TEXT OF WP HAS DONE NO REAL DAMAGE, BUT HE COULD NOT AGREE THAT THIS IS THE CASE. AS WE DOUBTLESS KNEW FROM OUR OWN SOURCES, WP IS BEING CAST THROUGHOUT ARAB WORLD AS AN "ISREALI PAPER." ARAFAT AND PLO LEADERS HAD AGAIN MADE THIS POINT DURING TODAY'S TALK, CITING WHAT DAYAN AND ISRAELI MEDIA ARE SAYING ABOUT IT. THERE HAD EVEN BEEN AMERICAN PRESS REPORTS QUOTING DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN AS CALLING IT WAS A "US-ISREALI PAPER." HE, FAHMY, HAD STRONGLY ARGUED THAT HE KNOWS OF NO "US-ISREALI PAPER." ALL HE KNOWS IS A "US PAPER" ON WHICH THE ISRAELIS HAVE COMMENTED. HE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE THAT LINE, BUT THE ISREALI HANDLING OF THE MATTER CREATES PROBLEMS. WE SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEM NOT ONLY HAS SUBSTANTIVE AND PROCEDURAL ASPECTS, BUT ALSO A PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION. IT IS THIS PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION WHICH IMMEDIATELY COMES INTO PLAY WHEN DAYAN MAKES THE PAPER PUBLIC AND CALLS IT A "US-ISREALI DOCUMENT." I TOLD HIM WE FULLY APPRECIATE THIS ASPECT, BUT HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPER WAS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. I HOPED HE WOULD CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT.

(C) HE WAS GLAD TO HAVE CONFIRMATION THAT HIS UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF SECRET

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PALESTINIAN DELEGATES IS THE SAME AS OURS.

(D) ON THE "REFUGEE" PROBLEM, HE ACCEPTED OUR EXPLANATION THAT THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN A SEPERATE MULTILATERAL GROUP WHOSE MAKE-UP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT. IN THIS CONNEC-

TION, HE NOTED THAT ARAFAT HAD HAD NO OBJECTION TO INCLUDING "JEWISH REFUGEES," WHICH ALL ASSUME TO BE A REFERENCE TO THE ISREALI DESIRE FOR INDEMNIFICATION FOR JEWS WHO LEFT ARAB COUNTRIES (FAHMY NOTED HE, TOO, WILL MAKE INDEMNIFICATION CLAIM AGAINST ISRAEL GOING BACK TO 1947). ARAFAT HAD SAID THIS DID NOT CONCERN HIM; IT WAS A METTER FOR THE ARAB STATES. HOWEVER, ARAFAT HAD OBJECTED TO THE REFERENCE TO "ARAB REFUGEES," ARGUING THAT THE ONLY REFUGEES ARE "PALESTINIAN REFUGEES."

(E) FAHMY THEN MADE A POINT WHICH HE SAID TROUBLES HIM CONSIDERABLY AND WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE CHANGED IF THE PAPER IS TO BE ACCEPTED. THE NEW PAPER, HE NOTED, HAD DROPPED THE LISTING OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR WEST BANK AND GAZA FROM THE GROUPS OR SUB-COMMITTEES NEGOTIATING PEACE TREATIES AND GIVEN IT A SEPARATE STATUS IN WHICH THE WEST BANK AND GAZA ISSUES ARE ONLY TO BE DISCUSSED. THIS SUGGESTS ISRAELIS HAVE NO INTENTION OF NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT TO WEST BANK AND GAZA ISSUES. MOREOVER, THE DELETED REFERENCE TO THE "PALESTINIAN QUESTION" IN THAT SECTION HAD TO BE REINSTATED IF THERE IS TO BE ANY CHANCE OF GETTING THE ARABS TO ACCEPT IT. HE WAS SOMEWHAT REFUL ABOUT THIS CHANGE, TERMING IT A BIT "TRICKY", AND NOTED WE HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY CITED THAT CHANGE WHEN WE GAVE HIM THE REVISED VERSION. I ASSURED HIM THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF TRICKINESS OR ANYTHING ELSE IN MAKING THIS CHANGE. WE KNEW FULL WELL THAT HE WOULD UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION. IT IS ONE OF THOSE CASES WHERE COMPROMISE IS NECESSARY IF WE ARE TO GET TO GENEVA.

(F) FAHMY WAS UNHAPPY ABOUT OUR INSISTENCE ON
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RETAINING THE REFERENCE TO UNSC RESOLUTION 242. HE AGAIN ARGUED THAT SINCE GENEVA IS A RESUMED CONFERENCE, THERE IS NO NEED TO CITE IT AND THAT IT WILL ONLY BE A RED FLAG TO THE PLO. MOREOVER, HE NOTED WE HAD DROPPED THE REFERENCE TO 242 IN THE US-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE. HE QUITE AGREED THAT THE ARAB GOVTS SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR INDIVIDUAL PALESTINIANS WHOSE PERSONAL VIEWS ARE NOT INCOMPATIBLE WITH TERMS OF WP, BUT AGAIN ARGUED THAT THERE MUST BE PLO REPRESENTATION IN SOME FORM. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE EXPRESSED SOME ANNOYANCE THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE NOW PUBLICLY STATING THEY ARE CONVASSING WEST BANK MAYORS AS POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS. HE CALLED THIS A "STUPID TACTIC" WHICH CAN ONLY BRING ABOUT NEW PROBLEMS IN RECONVENING GENEVA. I TOLD HIM THE REFERENCE TO UN RESOLUTION 242 IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY SINCE NOT ONLY ISRAEL, BUT USG AS WELL ATTACHES GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO IT. HE DID NOT PURSUE THE SUBJECT, BUT IT WILL COME UP AGAIN

(G) HE THOUGHT IT WAS WISE THAT WE ARE PROVIDING SOVIETS WITH TEXT OF WP AND BRIEFING THEM. ARAFAT HAD TOLD HIM THE INITIAL SOVIET REACTION TO NEWS OF THE WP WAS ONE OF SUSPICION THAT WE ARE AGAIN SEEKING TO EXCLUDE THEM. THE SOVIETS, ACCORDING TO ARAFAT, ARE CONCERNED THAT THEY WILL BE KEPT OUT OF THE WORKING PARTIES. HE, FAHMY, HAD ASSURED ARAFAT THAT IT WAS HIS CLEAR UNDERSTANDING FROM HIS TALKS IN THE US THAT EITHER TH US AND THE SOVIETS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKING PARTIES OR, ALTERNATIVELY, A UN REPRESENTATIVE SUCH AS SIILASVUO WILL DO SO. HE URGED THAT WE SEEK TO REASSURE THE SOVIETS ON THIS POINT.

5. FAHMY THEN SAID HE HAD ANOTHER POINT ON WHICH HE
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NEEDED AN URGENT ANSWER, IF POSSIBLE BY TOMORROW AFTERNOON WHEN SADAT MEETS WITH ARAFAT. SPECIFICALLY, IF A FORMUAL ON RECONVENING GENEVA CAN BE WORKED OUT, HE WONDERED HOW WE THEN PROPOSE TO PROCEED. HE ASSUMED THE MATTER WOULD BE CLEARED WITH THE SOVIETS. THEREAFTER, THE TWO CO-CHAIRMEN MIGHT MAKE A STATEMENT INVITING THE PARTIES TO COMPOSE THEIR OWN DELEGATIONS. WITH ISRAEL, IT IS A SIMPLE MATTER. IN THEIR PART, THE ARABS WOULD HAVE TO COORDINATE WITH THE PALESTINIANS, PLO, SYRIANS, JORDANIANS AND LEBANESE ABUT A UNIFIED DELEGATION. WHEN ALL THE NAMES HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON AMONG THE ARABS, THEY WOULD BE GIVEN TO US AND TO THE SOVIETS AND WE COULD COMMUNICATE THEM TO THE ISRAELIS. IF ISRAEL OBJECTS TO ANY PARTICIPANT, THE ARABS CAN ARRANGE TO CHANGE HIM. AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO PROCEED WOULD BE FOR THE CO-CHAIRMEN TO SEND INVITATIONS TO THE PARTIES. AGAIN, IN THE CASE OF THE ISRAELIS, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM. IN THE CASE OF THE ARABS, HOWEVER, THRE IS A QUESTION OF HOW THIS MIGHT BE DONE. IF SUCH INVITATIONS ARE SENT, ONE MUST ALSO BE SENT TO THE PLO IF THE ARABS ARE GOING TO ACCEPT. FAHMY ERSONALLY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST NOT TO SEND INVITATIONS TO ANYONE, BUT TO FOLLOW A PROCEDURE ALONG THE LINES OF HIS FIRST ALTERNATIVE. HE HOPED WE COULD PROVIDE HIM WITH OUR THINKING ON THIS MATTER ASAP.

6. FINALLY, FAHMY SAID THAT HE HOPED PRESIDENT SADAT'S REPLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER CAN BE GIVEN TO ME EITHER SOMETIME LATE AFTERNOON OR ON THURSDAY. IN PROVIDING ABOVE COMMENTS, HE EMPHASIZED ONCE AGAIN THAT HE HAS NO DESIRE TO BE DIFFICULT, BUT IS FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF DEALING WITH THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION IN THE ARAB WORLD. I TOLD HIS WE APPRECIATE HIS EFFORTS AND HIS CONCERNS, BUT STRESSED WE TOO ARE TRYING TO COPE WITH THE REALITIES POSED BY THE SENSITIVITIES OF BOTH SIDES. UNLESS THERE IS SOME COMPROMISE AND A WILLINGNESS

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TO TAKE SOME CHANCES, WE COULD ALL BE HUNG UP INDEFINITELY.
THIS, I KNEW, NEITHER SADAT NOR HE WANTED.
I URGED THAY THEY AGAIN LOOK AT THE WP IN THAT CONTEXT.
EILTS UNQUOTE VANCE

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